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AN EARLY ITALIAN EDITION OF ÆSOP'S FABLES.

The library of Harvard University contains a mediæval collection of Æsop's fables¹ in an edition that seems to be one of a definite group to which attention has not yet been called. The distinguishing characteristic of the members of this group is the fact that the Latin text of each fable is explained by a prose commentary in Italian, as if these books were meant for Italian school-boys. The following is a brief account of the Harvard Æsop with a mention of various similar editions.

The label title of the Harvard collection reads : "Esopi Fabule cum interpretatione vulgari 7 figuris acri cura emendate." This is found on the first right-hand page above a combination wood-cut. The cut represents five men seated about a central figure, who is in a raised chair and seems to be giving them instruction. On the reverse page is a dedication in Roman type beginning : "Vincentius Metallus Ciratae Adolescentiæ." It is explained in this dedication that the grammatical mistakes sometimes found in an Æsop collection have been carefully rectified by Bartholomeo Maschara, so that this edition is well fitted for the edification of the young. The frequently occurring introduction to an Æsop collection : "Ut iuvet et prosit conatur pagina presens," etc., occurs on the upper part of the second right-hand page. After each of the six distichs which make up this introduction the Latin words are put into Italian prose order and then translated into Italian.

On the same page, directly following the introduction, begin the fables. All the fables except the last two are accompanied by crude wood-cuts 57 mm. high and 75 mm. wide. The fables are numbered from I to LXVI, but fable LVI is unfinished, fables LVII and LVIII are lacking, fable

LIX is without the first few lines, and finally fable LXVI is unfinished. The colophon which is usual in such an edition is also missing. The book now has thirty-eight leaves. It seems likely that a folded sheet, which would have made the thirty-third and fortieth leaves, has been lost. The two missing fables, as well as parts of two of the incomplete fables, must have been on the original thirty-third leaf, and the last fable must have been completed on the fortieth leaf, on which was probably a colophon. This supposition is borne out by the evidence of the collation, which runs as follows : [A] Aij Aij Aiiij (4 unmarked) B Bij Bii Biiij (4 un.) C Cij Cij Ciiij (4 un.) D Dij Dij Diiij (4 un.) Eij Eij Eiiij (3 un.). The book is 212 mm. high and 155 mm. wide. It has an old binding in thick paper with remnants of a strip of parchment sewed on around the edges. The binding is very dilapidated and covered with almost illegible handwriting. The work at present contains no date, and neither the name of the printer nor place of publication are given. This copy was formerly the property of Professor Charles Eliot Norton.

The general character of the Harvard collection is of unusual interest, for it was evidently prepared with the double purpose of teaching Latin to Italian schoolboys and of bringing before them worthy moral instruction. These features may be illustrated by considering a typical fable, number XLVI, which is entitled "De Philomena et Accipitre." It begins : "Hic ponitur alia fabula cuius documentum est," then comes a brief declaration of the moral : "homines p[er]uere viuentes sepe mala morte moriunt ut plurimum," and then the story of the hawk and nightingale told in Latin prose. The prose narrative closes with another moralising : "Moraliter per philomenam possunt intelligi boni ; per accipitrem vero mali," etc. After this there comes a series of nine distichs giving the story of the fable in Latin elegiac verse ; the last of the distichs again presents a moral. The distichs are printed in a Gothic type

¹*Nor. 2480.

about twice the size of that used for the remainder of the text. After each distich the Latin is arranged in the word order of an Italian sentence and after each Latin phrase is given a translation in Italian. Thus :

“Dum philomena sedet : studium movet oris
ameni.

Sic sibi : sic nido visa placere suo

Philomena movet studiū oris ameni : la ro-
signola si move lo cāto de la bocca delettevola :
dū sedet in arbore : domente che lazase su l'arbore :
7 est visa placere sic sibi : 7 così parse piacersi a
se : 7 visa sic placere suo nido : 7 parsa così di
piaser al nido suo.”

The ultimate source of this Æsop is the Latin fable collection written probably by Gualterus Anglicus towards the year 1175 A. D.³ The Latin distichs of the Harvard Æsop correspond exactly, or almost so, to the distichs which are found in the original Gualterus Anglicus text.³ There are only occasional variations and these as to a single word, a form or a spelling. The order of the first sixty-one fables of the Harvard Æsop is identical with that of the sixty-one which make up the total number in the Gualterus Anglicus. The Harvard text has five more fables at the end, which of course have no equivalent in the remote original. But the first two of these fables correspond to the two additional fables in the enlarged Gualterus of about the year 1250.⁴ At some later date probably this collection had added to it the Latin prose accounts and the interlinear explanations in Italian.

There is an Æsop collection published at Brescia by Louis Breton in 1542 which undoubtedly represents a different edition of the Harvard Æsop. The text has been examined through the courtesy of Dr. K. McKenzie of Yale University who now owns a copy of this edition. Dedication and title are almost identical. The first sixty-six fables in each correspond except for unimportant variations. There is a slight difference at the end :

³Hervieux, *Les Fabulistes Latins*, Paris, 1893. 2nd. ed., Vol. I, p. 494.

³Wendelin Foerster, “Lyoner Yzopet : Altfranzösische Übersetzung des XIII. Jahrhunderts in der Mundart der Franche-Comté, mit dem kritischen Text des Lateinischen Originals.” Heilbronn, 1882.

⁴Hervieux, Vol. II, pp. 350-351; *ZRP*, xxxii, p. 94.

the sixty-fifth and sixty-sixth fables of the 1542 edition are not numbered and there is added a sixty-seventh fable, “De Avibus et Pavone,” not found in the Harvard Æsop. As in the Harvard Æsop wood-cuts accompany each fable up to and including the sixty-fourth, and the remainder are not illustrated. The wood-cuts of the two collections are much the same in general conception.

The Bibliothèque Mazarine in Paris also contains an edition which belongs to this group.⁵ The main text is the same as that of the other collections. The title is different, and reads : “Esopus Constructus moralizatus et historicatus et optime emendatus ad utilitatem Discipulorum.” Below the title is printed : “Apud Antonium Mondellā et Fratres. M. D. L.” This title, however, and this name and date, seem to have been added on the first blank page some time after the rest of the book was printed. The number of fables is sixty-eight; the first sixty-five are accompanied by wood-cuts. The general dedication of the fables is not like that in the collections already spoken of, and the last four of the sixty-eight fables differ somewhat in character from those preceding. Otherwise the edition is like the others that have been mentioned.

A fourth collection—also now owned by Dr. K. McKenzie and examined through his kindness—varies only slightly from those described. The dedication is lacking and the Latin prose argument of each fable has been changed and reduced, sometimes to only a line or two. The interlinear explanations are in Roman type instead of Gothic. The last three of the sixty-seven fables are illustrated as well as the others, but the three wood-cuts used for this purpose have already been employed to accompany other fables of the collection. The book is dated 1587; it was published at Brescia by Polycrētus Turlinus. The wood-cuts are much like those in the 1542 edition.

The above comparisons are based on a direct examination of the editions themselves. There are several other similar collections which have been compared by the aid of data found in various catalogues.

⁵Shelf number : Inc. 255. 3. The data about this edition have been furnished by the kindness of Dr. G. C. Keidel and Mr. J. N. Ware of the Johns Hopkins University.

The British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books⁶ mentions an "Aesopus Moralisatus — with an interlinear Italian gloss" published at Brescia in 1497 by Bernadinus de misintis de Papia. It has sixty-three fables. The same catalogue⁷ describes the following edition, which is to be especially noted as having a title identical with that of the Harvard *Æsop*: "Aesopi Fabulae cum interpretatione vulgari (i. e., an interlinear Italian gloss): et figuris acri cura emendatae. Ludovicus Brittanicus et Fratres; Brixiae, 1522." The edition has sixty-seven fables. Obviously this *Æsop* collection is very similar to the one at Harvard. The British Museum Catalogue also mentions⁸ a collection entitled "Aesopi Fabulae . . . cum vulgari interpretatione [i. e. an interlinear Italian gloss together with a commentary] et figuris . . . emendatae," printed at Parma by S. de Viottis in 1547.

Brunet⁹ mentions what seems to be another edition of the *Æsop* at Harvard. The dedication bears the same title and conveys the same information, namely that the collection was prepared by Bartholomeo Maschara. The label-titles are identical. The Brunet *Æsop* has sixty-three fables, each illustrated by a wood-cut. The text is in Latin distichs accompanied by the familiar Italian gloss. This edition was published at Brescia in 1532 by Louis Breton.

An "Esopus Constructus et moralizatus ad utilitatem discipulorum" is mentioned in a catalogue of incunabula in the library of Henry Walters of Baltimore.¹⁰ The book was printed by Bernadinus de misintis de Papia at Brescia in 1495. There are two different sizes of type used, both Gothic. Lechi,¹¹ speaking of the same edition, adds that the interlinear Italian occurs in smaller type. The number of fables is not mentioned by either. It is to be noted that the title of this incunabulum suggests that of the collection

of 1497,¹² which was also published at Brescia, and that the same name, Bernadinus de misintis de Papia, occurs in both. The title of the Walters incunabulum is also like that of the edition in the Bibliothèque Mazarine.¹³

Eight editions besides the one at Harvard have been described with more or less detail. In closing, it may be worth while to give a brief summary of the facts collected about the editions, mentioning those features which are most characteristic. The dates of these editions range from 1495 to 1587. There is not enough evidence to date the Harvard collection, but since it most closely resembles the Brescia edition of 1542 its time of publication may be placed near that year. Seven of the collections were published at Brescia, and one at Parma. The two earliest editions recorded, those of 1495 and 1497, have the name of Bernadinus de misintis de Papia. The next three, the editions of 1522, 1532 and 1542, were published by Louis Breton. The number of fables varies from sixty-three to sixty-eight. The increase in number is not regular, according to successive dates of publication; a collection of sixty-three fables is found following one of sixty-seven.¹⁴ In every case there is an interlinear Italian gloss adapted apparently to the use of Italian school-boys. This is the most interesting feature of all. These collections represent a definite group of mediæval editions of *Æsop*'s fables, with dates that cover nearly a century, published with a definite purpose: the edification and instruction of Italian youth.

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EDGAR ALLAN POE AND FRIEDRICH SPIELHAGEN. THEIR THEORY OF THE SHORT STORY.

The centennial anniversary of the birth of Edgar Allan Poe in January of last year was made the occasion of a widespread recognition of

⁶ William Clowes and Sons, London, 1883. *Æsop*, col. 14, shelf no. 12304. e. 5.

⁷ Col. 16, shelf no. G. 7751.

⁸ Col. 16, shelf no. G. 7757.

⁹ *Manuel du Libraire*, 5th ed., Vol. I, col. 92.

¹⁰ *Incunabula Typographica* . . . in the library of Henry Walters, Baltimore, 1906. Pp. 4-5. This incunabulum has been inaccessible.

¹¹ Lechi, Luigi, "Della Tipografia Bresciana nel secolo decimoquinto"; Brescia, 1854, p. 55, no. 8.

¹² Cf. above British Museum Catalogue, 12304. e. 5.

¹³ Though the authenticity of this last title, it will be remembered, is doubtful.

¹⁴ Editions of 1522 and 1532.